



State of Wisconsin
Jim Doyle, Governor

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Rod Nilsestuen, Secretary

February 5, 2010

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4902

Dear Representative Baldwin:

I am writing to request your support for a \$500,000 FY 11 appropriations request for a project to determine whether remote-monitoring of bulk-tank temperatures could be used to assure milk safety while reducing the number of on-farm inspections.

This project would determine whether remote-monitoring of bulk-tank temperatures could be used to assure milk safety while reducing the number of on-farm inspections. Dairy farms are regulated under the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO), which requires states to inspect Grade A dairy farms at least once every six months.

States must enforce the PMO in order for milk to be shipped in interstate commerce. Farm inspections require a substantial investment of staff time and resources, particularly in Wisconsin with its large number of dairy farms. These farm inspections typically focus on issues such as cleanliness, construction requirements, and drug storage. While these issues are important, on-site farm inspections do not necessarily assure milk safety. Monitoring bulk-tank temperatures using modern, scientific tools and evaluating laboratory testing results could provide an effective substitute for frequent on-farm inspections. This technique would also enable our staff to focus their inspection efforts on higher-risk operation.

Wisconsin has long supported efforts to reduce the need for on-site farm inspections for high-performing farms. Wisconsin developed and implemented PMO-approved performance-based farm inspection, which is a system that determines inspection frequency based on a farm's inspection and milk quality performance.

This project builds upon your efforts to enhance our nation's public health infrastructure and safeguard our food supply while serving on the Health Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee. I appreciate your consideration of this request, and please feel free to contact my office if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Rod Nilsestuen
Secretary